What exactly is ePHI? Who has to worry about it?

There is often a great deal of confusion and misinformation about what constitutes ePHI (electronic protected health information) and how to protect it under HIPAA requirements. Even once you understand ePHI and how it applies to you, the next question becomes, where is ePHI permitted? What is secure and what is not?

In this post, we will answer the "what is ePHI" question in general and the "where can I put it" question regarding HIPAA compliant email, email hosting, and secure form processing with LuxSci.

What constitutes electronic Protected Health Information?

ePHI is individually identifiable protected health information that is sent or stored electronically. Protected health information refers specifically to three classes of data:

1. An individual's past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition

2. The past, present, or future provisioning of health care to an individual

3. The past, present, or future payment-related information for the provisioning of health care to an individual

"Individually identifiable" means information that can be somehow linked to a specific individual (even if this is very indirect). There are 18 types of identifiers for an individual (listed below). Any one of these identifiers, combined with "protected health information" (e.g., an appointment with a particular doctor), would constitute ePHI.

Read more about ePHI at luxsci.com.